

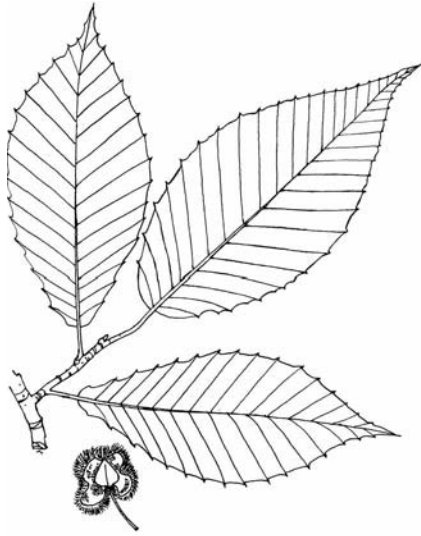
AMERICAN BEECH

Fagus grandifolia Ehrh.

American beech occurs statewide, grows up to 70 feet in height and 13 feet in diameter. Shoots often spring up from the roots. Beech is common and sometimes forms nearly pure stands. It grows best on rich upland soil.

The **bark** is of a light gray color and smooth unless affected by beech bark disease.

The **leaves** are alternate, from 3-5 inches long, elliptic, acutely pointed, with coarse, and hooked teeth. The margin between the teeth is nearly straight. Dead leaves tend to remain on trees into the winter.



The **fruit** consists of a bur, which usually contains 2 triangular edible nuts. These are sweet and are utilized for food by wildlife. The **winter buds** are long, slender, many scaled, and sharp-pointed.



The **wood** is strong, hard and tough but not durable. It is used for clothespins, furniture, handles, woodenware, railroad ties, pulp, dowels, flooring, and pallets.

European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* L.) and **Purple or Copper Beech** (*Fagus sylvatica* var. *atropunicea*, West) are two species of European origin planted in southern and central Maine as ornamentals.